

D&C Lesson # 5
This Is the Spirit of Revelation
D&C 6 - 9; JS-H 1:8-17
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(Here is inspirational background and evidences supporting the Restoration)

I. Why would a God who had revealed His word from Heaven, and even sent His Son to testify of Him and redeem mankind, suddenly stop all revelation?

A. No wonder some men came to believe “God is dead!”

B. But God did not die; **only the faith of men died.**

C. For centuries man thus relied on his own wisdom, which led to “abominable [creeds]” (Joseph Smith History 1:19).

1. Such must include that Jesus lied when he said all men must be baptized to enter into His kingdom (John 3:5), or else all those who died without baptism are sent to Hell and only those whom God elected to receive His grace will be saved.

D. Now the Lord reveals that **He is still active and ready to reveal His word to those of faith --- by voice, by messengers, and by hidden up sacred records.**

1. And through doing so we learn what a truly great, wise and merciful being God is: who has provided the way that **every person who ever lived on the earth will have the opportunity eventually to hear the Gospel and receive all saving ordinances, and can be both saved and exalted, if they make that choice.**

2. God did speak to Joseph, and what He revealed truly are “marvelous works and wonders.”

II. The Lord promised that not only the Golden Plates, but other ancient and sacred records would come forth which would reveal even more light upon His Gospel.

A. Oliver is told of those other records.

B. “Verily I say ...**there are records which contain much of my gospel, which have been kept back because of the wickedness [unbelief] of the people.**

Oliver is promised if he has good desires “then shall you assist in bringing to light... those parts of my scriptures which have been **hidden because of iniquity**” (D&C 6:26-27).

C. In fact, within that same month Section 7 was revealed which is a “translated version of the record made on parchment by John and hidden up by himself” (HC 1:35-36).

1. This record answered Joseph’s and Oliver’s question concerning the fate of John, and reveals that John was allowed to live in translated form until the return of Christ. (1)

D. Oliver is further told if he asks in faith with an honest heart, he shall receive “knowledge concerning the engravings of old records, which are ancient, which contain those parts of my scripture of which has been spoken by the manifestation of my spirit” (D&C 8:1).

1. Oliver should “Ask that you may know the mysteries of God, and ... receive knowledge from **all those ancient records which have been hid up, that are sacred;**” (D&C 8:11).

E. **Was this not promise that writings from Moses, Abraham and Enoch would be revealed, which contained many vital truths concerning God and His plan of salvation, as has occurred?**

1. Oliver did have some involvement with translating the Book of Abraham, though he was not its main scribe, due to other duties.

2. Oliver would know the truth of those writings by “**the spirit of revelation.**”

F. **Thus while many unwisely challenge their validity, to those of faith, the precious truths of the writings of Moses, Abraham and Enoch are now known “by the spirit of revelation!”**

1. And since the time of Joseph Smith, LDS scholars have found more and more physical evidences that these writings are also true records, just as is the Book of Mormon.
2. And such evidences are recorded, for those who are willing to seek.

III. The wondrous truth is that **God not only speaks again through prophets, but He will give accompanying witnesses to each individual to know that what the prophet speaks is true.**

A. I have many of my own witnesses of how the Lord does testify to us individually that what we are hearing from His servants is true.

1. I remember listening to a stake president many years ago, who spoke of how the aborted sacrifice of Isaac was a similitude of the willing sacrifice Jesus would make of Himself for His Father. I felt a strong burning throughout my body which testified to me this was true!

2. My very life in the church is a totality of witnesses from the Spirit that what our prophets speak is true. Most are not as dramatic, but they continually give me sure knowledge and clear vision of God's beautiful purposes for mankind.

3. This includes the following experience: During the time that black men could not receive the priesthood, I was deeply troubled. I had lived in the South, and had developed great empathy for the plight of this people. I felt their blackness **was actually a gift from God** to protect them from the sun's harmful rays. [Especially since that part of their bodies not exposed to the sun --- the bottoms of their hands and feet--- are white]. I since found verification for this belief. (2)

At the same time, I loved the Church, and it pained me deeply to see it considered cruel.

I finally knelt upon my knees and poured out my heart. I finally prayed that if possible the Lord allow them all blessings. When I arose from my knees, **I felt an amazing spirit of peace.** And it was not too long after that I was able to rejoice that all worthy men could receive the priesthood. How I rejoiced in the words of the prophets at that time.

I do not know why the denial had occurred. But as I read the wondrous examples of those with black bodies who accepted the restored gospel in spite of this ban, **my testimony is greatly strengthened --- due to their great witness of faith, patience and humility. How God must love them for such faith!** And the Lord has consistently said the last shall eventually be first.

IV. Here is another's example of how we can know by revelation the truth of what our leaders teach.

A. Dr. Robert Millett, a religion professor at Brigham Young University, felt "revelation" when his stake president said in setting him apart as bishop: "Give to the people of your ward a vision of eternal life. Help them know they can make it." He could not forget those words. They came back to him over and over again, even as he dealt with problems of the most serious nature. It made him always be encouraging to others, in spite of the most serious of problems.

This revelation was further amplified by an apostle, Elder Bruce R. McConkie.

Speaking to a group of Church Educational instructors, Elder McConkie told them "You tell your students that far more of our Father's children will be exalted than we think!"

Brother Millett said he never had a more "enlightening" lecture than that given by Elder McConkie who testified that God is a loving parent who will save vast numbers of his children.

He later heard Elder McConkie later address students themselves, saying, "As members of the Church, if we chart a course leading to eternal life; if we begin the processes of spiritual rebirth, and are going in the right direction; if we chart a course of sanctifying our souls, and degree by degree are going in that direction; and if we chart a course of becoming perfect, and, step by step and phase by phase, are perfecting our souls by overcoming the world, then it is absolutely

guaranteed --- there is no question whatever about it --- we shall gain eternal life. Even though we have spiritual rebirth ahead of us, perfection ahead of us, the full degree of sanctification ahead of us, if we chart a course and follow it to the best of our ability in this life, then when we go out of this life we'll continue in exactly that same course. We'll no longer be subject to the passions and the appetites of the flesh. We will have passed successfully the tests of this mortal probation and in due course we'll get the fullness of our Father's kingdom --- and that means eternal life in his everlasting presence" (Jesus Christ and Him Crucified," 1976 Devotional Speeches of the Year, pp. 400 --- 401).

B. These very special revelatory experiences helped Brother Millett understand more fully the love of God for his children. They helped him minister with love and encouragement to all those he had stewardship over.

C. All of us can know more surely of God's love through simply seeking and then receiving personal revelation of our own, especially to the truth of the words of the prophets.

V. The Lord also gives specific revelation for our individual needs.

A. **This is one of the great messages of the Doctrine and Covenants: that the Lord reveals to individuals according to their needs.**

B. The D&C is full of such revelations. Beginning with the Lord's specific revelations to individuals of that time, all Latter-day Saints can know of a surety that He will indeed reveal His will to us as individuals.

C. To begin with, **Joseph Smith's own plea to the Lord for a scribe was answered three days later by the arrival of Oliver Cowdery who had felt impressed after prayer to go and help with the work** (History of Joseph Smith, p. 141).

D. Oliver Cowdery is a great example of needs met --- to know certain things about himself.

1. He needed to know that he had a "gift" which was sacred and was from God (D&C 6:10).

2. He also needed to know he had a second gift, the gift of Aaron, which was to be a spokesman for the prophet (D&C 6-8).

3. He needed to know that if he inquired, God would reveal to him certain hidden things, and after he received them he should share them to "bring many to the knowledge of the truth" (D&C 6:11). (See also D&C 8:1, 11).

4. He had asked the Lord in private without Joseph knowing if the Book of Mormon were true. But **his answer came through a revelation to Joseph Smith, thus confirming that Joseph truly was a prophet**, in addition to the fact that the Book of Mormon was a true record from God. (History of the Church 1:35; D&C 6:17).

5. How comforting it is to know a God from the Realms of Glory has the power to alert our minds and our hearts of things we need to know. How foolish we are to doubt and reject that.

I personally testify that God's Word "Is," and not just "Was."

(1) LDS scholars point out it is not known whether Joseph saw the actual parchment and received power to translate it or whether its contents were revealed without a written source. (Doctrine and Covenants and Church History Student Study Guide)

(2) In fact scientific study shows that darker skin occurs in those areas where the skin is exposed to the most sunlight. And the "leading theory is that skin color adapts to intense sunlight irradiation to provide partial protection against the ultraviolet fraction that produces damage." (Wikipedia on "what causes black skin.")